

GETTING THERE

Cars and coaches In Altena, continue towards the castle – “Burg Altena” – car park “Langer Kamp” (GPS: “Langer Kamp”). 5 minutes on foot.

If you are planning to approach Altena Castle by way of the “infotainment” elevator, there are two places for coaches to stop on Linscheid Str., near the Sparkasse bank, where passengers can board and get off.

Train Altena station: 20 minutes on foot.

Public bus service Bus stop Altena, Bungern. Then 5 minutes’ walk.

Information on bus schedule at: www.mvg-online.de

Citizens’ bus (Bürgerbus) Altena, No. 4 April to October: Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays, shuttle service between “Langer Kamp” car park, German Wire Museum and Altena Castle or base station for “Infotainment Elevator”. Group trips should best book in advance

Information on shuttle schedule: www.buergerbus-altena.de

ADDRESSES AND VISITOR INFOS

German Wire Museum

Fritz-Thomé-Str. 12
(Please use “Langer Kamp” car park)
D-58762 Altena

Opening hours

Tue. – Fri. 9.30 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Sat., Sun., public holidays 11 a.m. – 6 p.m.
Closed on Mondays, except public holidays
Closed on December 24, 25 and 31, and on January 1

Free admission on the following days

Good Friday, International Museum Day,
Open Monument Day, Boxing Day 26 Dec.

To get info and book guided tours

Tel. +49(0)2352 966-7034
museen@maerkischer-kreis.de
www.deutsches-drahtmuseum.de

Combined tickets

Admission tickets are also valid for Altena Castle located about 500 m uphill from the German Wire Museum. The two museums can be visited on separate days.

Castle Restaurant – Burgrestaurant Altena

Tel. +49(0)2352 5488695
info@burgrestaurant-altena.de
www.burgrestaurant-altena.de

DJH Youth Hostel

Tel. +49(0)2352 23522
jh-burg.altena@djh-wl.de

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D-58762 Altena



CATALOGUE AND BRIEF GUIDE

Catalogue

“Wire – From Chain Mail to Superconductor” is the title of the 341-page catalogue for the permanent exhibition at the German Wire Museum. At the same time, the catalogue is also a popular scientific manual on the topic of wire.

21 articles – historical, technical and even humorous – provide specialists and laypersons with comprehensive insights into this multi-faceted subject. The book is available from the museum shops at the German Wire Museum and Altena Castle as well as in bookstores (ISBN 3-933519-15-2) at a price of EUR 20.

Brief Guide

The pocket-sized guide book is ideal for those who prefer information in a more concise form. The booklet is helpful to anyone who wants to explore the exhibition at the German Wire Museum on his or her own. It is on sale at the museum shop at a price of EUR 2 and available in eight languages: German, Dutch, English, French, Spanish, Polish, Russian and Turkish.



GERMAN WIRE MUSEUM

Civilisation without wire? Inconceivable! From the wire ropes and cables on a modern suspension bridge to the ball in the bearing of a wheel or the staple on your teabag – there’s wire everywhere. At the German Wire Museum, located only a few hundred metres from Altena Castle, visitors can look forward to numerous surprises, all related to the topic of wire. How was wire manufactured in the past? And how is it made now? What conditions do wire-drawers work under? What products are made of wire? What do artists create with wire? A modern, varied presentation and intriguing exhibits provide answers to these and many other questions. A number of experimenting stations invite visitors to “have a go” and find out more. The wire drawing machines are in operation during guided tours. A great experience, not only for “live wires”!



 MÄRKISCHER KREIS

GERMAN WIRE MUSEUM

FROM CHAIN MAIL TO SUPERCONDUCTOR



European Route of Industrial Heritage





GERMAN WIRE MUSEUM FROM CHAIN MAIL TO SUPERCONDUCTOR

Within Sight of Altena Castle

Altena, which has been the centre of the German wire industry since the Middle Ages, is also the location of the German Wire Museum. The museum is accommodated in a former school building just 500 metres downhill from Altena Castle. It was opened there in 1999 in the form of a modern, visitor-orientated experience exhibition. Diverse aspects of wire as the central theme are presented under the motto "From Chain Mail to Superconductor". The technical history of wire is just as much in focus as its social, economic and cultural past. How is wire manufactured? What sort of working conditions do wire drawers have? What end products are made with wire? What do artists create from wire? These and many other questions are answered during a tour of the museum with the aid of a state-of-the-art, varied presentation and enthralling, often incredible, exhibits.



Experiencing Wire

The German Wire Museum is a modern experience museum. A replica of a historical wire-drawing stand has been set up in the forecourt on which young and old can try their hand at drawing wire and experience how much physical strength this required. The noise level rises when the wire tumble-wash equipment starts up directly next door. The museum is especially proud of its wire drawing machines dating between 1920 and 1952. A demonstration of how wire was drawn and rolled is given during a guided tour of the museum. Films produced specifically for the museum as well as historical photos and recordings visualise the manufacture of wire today and in the past.



Experiments with Wire

But it is also important to try out as much as possible. A whole range of experimenting stations encourage visitors to "have a go"! They can find out, for instance, whether the strength of their muscles would have been sufficient to draw wire in the Middle Ages; they can pilot an aircraft, play the piano and the harp, examine the inner structure of wire through a microscope or tap out an SOS message in Morse code. On some of the high-tech tests, visitors also find out that wire can measure extremely high temperatures and weights. Further stations explain all the important mechanical and electrical properties of wire in an entertaining and fun way. As a result, the visit to the museum is an unforgettable experience for the whole family as well as for groups and school classes.



SPECIAL EXHIBITIONS

The German Wire Museum and the Altena Castle Museums regularly hold interesting and even extraordinary special exhibitions. An artistic approach to the material wire was presented in "Man - Space - Light. Wire Sculptures by Stefanie Welk" and "NEEDLEconTEXT - Objects by Angelika M. Schäfer". The exhibitions are frequently so extensive that they are presented in both buildings. Hairstyles Over the Ages, Dolls' Houses and Play Shops, or Eating and Drinking in the Early Modern Age - time and again, such attractive topics provide a good reason to visit the Wire Museum.



MUSEUM EDUCATION

It gets really noisy and exciting at the German Wire Museum whenever the machines are put into operation during a guided tour. And when such tours are for children, they become engrossed in the working world of wire-drawers as well. Dexterity and some physical strength are called for to get the most out of the "Wire Drawers of Altena" tour - and receive a wire-drawing diploma at the end. At the beginning of the children's "All in Wire" tour, the young visitors have to guess what is in a look-and-feel box. This programme is ideal for school classes and children's birthdays. On the first Sunday of each month the museum offers free guided tours at 11 a.m., 2 p.m. and 4 p.m. Only the admission fee into the museum needs be paid. All guided tours can be booked by phone, e-mail or by filling out a form on the website.

